



CERRO COPPER PRODUCTS CO.

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16320005
REF 20
ST/CL

October 4, 1989

CERTIFIED MAIL

Mr. Paul E. Takacs, Manager
Federal Site Management Unit
Remedial Project Management Unit
Division of Land Pollution Control
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
P. O. Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276

Subject: Pole Drilling Incident - 9/20/89
L163200005--St. Clair
Sauget Sites (Area I, Site I)

Dear Paul:

This letter is written to provide a complete description of the pole drilling incident which took place on the subject property on 9/20/89. As you are aware Cerro has been taking positive steps to secure the area in question. An 8 foot high chain link fence topped with barbed wire has been erected around the Dead Creek Segment A. In conjunction with this increased security, Cerro is installing an electronic surveillance system around its plant with panning television cameras monitoring Area I, Site I. To this end Cerro's contractor, Pyramid Electric, was erecting a pole to carry cable to the camera system which would monitor Area I, Site I. Cerro's consultant had recently completed a detailed characterization of Dead Creek Segment A sediments. From all available information at the time Cerro had no reason to believe that Site I landfill waste extended that close to Old Queeny Road.

At approximately 3:30 p.m. on 9/20/89, the drilling crew hit an object that may have been a buried drum of an unknown nature. At that time a Mr. Robert Gusmann from Pyramid was overcome by vapors apparently emanating from the hole. When I arrived at the site, I observed a hole approximately 16 to 20 inches in diameter and approximately 6 to 8 feet deep. There was an odor of chlorinated hydrocarbons. Mr. Gusmann was directed to our Medical Department where we have a registered nurse on staff to provide first aid. Mr. Gusmann was complaining of a tightness in the chest and dizziness. At Medical, Mr. Gusmann was given oxygen and told to wash his hands of the soil he had contacted at the drilling site when he tried to remove what appears to have been a barrel lid from the auger. He then was transported to the hospital by a Cerro contracted ambulance.

It was then decided that the hole should be filled in to prevent any other vapors from escaping. Two Cerro employees wearing organic vapor respirators and using a wheel loader pushed the dirt brought up from the hole back into the hole and covered the hole with construction sand. The hole was completely covered by 4:00 p.m.

→ 4:30



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In the evening, Cerro took a sample off the auger and brought it to the Monsanto Lab for possible identification in an effort to help the doctor treating Mr. Gusmann. Monsanto's lab phoned Cerro's Plant Manager at about 3:10 a.m. to inform him that the best they could determine it was a high boiling point petroleum distillate. Cerro had the sample returned and sent it to Environmetrics in St. Louis to determine its composition. I have attached a copy of their lab report.

On 9/25/89, Cerro had its consultant, The Avendt Group, drill back down through the same hole to obtain a sample for IEPA and Cerro. The sample was sent to Gulf Coast Labs in Chicago, IL. Results are expected in about 2 to 3 weeks. Cerro will share its results with IEPA. We also request that IEPA provide Cerro a copy of its lab results. The hole drilled by Avendt was grouted at the bottom and again at the top after the cuttings were placed back into the hole.

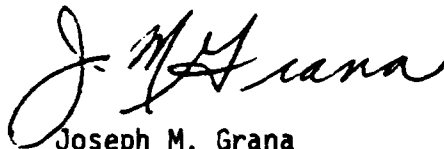
On 9/25/89, two representatives from the IEPA Collinsville field office, a Mr. Tom Powell and a Mr. Tom Miller were at Cerro to investigate the incident. While at the facility, they took photographs of the site. Later that day, Tom Miller returned to pick up a split sample taken from the hole.

At your recommendation, Pyramid Electric's trucks were decontaminated with a high pressure water cleaner and detergent on 9/26/89 and returned to Pyramid. The water was directed to the process sewer per your instructions.

If you have any questions, please contact this office.

Very truly yours,

CERRO COPPER PRODUCTS CO.



Joseph M. Grana
Manager of Environmental
and Energy Affairs

JMG:slt

cc: Ken Mensing - IEPA-Collinsville

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March 29, 1995
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